

CAPE FEAR HISTORIC BYWAY

The Cape Fear Historic Byway in downtown Wilmington guides motorists through one of the most scenic urban areas in the

nation as it travels beside the tranquil Cape Fear River, along thriving colonial-era streets and through the majestic Greenfield

Park and Gardens.

Known as the Port City, Wilmington was incorporated in 1739 and sits on a peninsula between the Cape Fear River and Atlantic Ocean. The city contains North Carolina's richest collection of 19th century urban architecture and still maintains the original grid pattern finalized in 1743. Wilmington was built, for the most part, by commission merchants and prosperous businessmen who indulged themselves in the extravagances of the culture of the late 1800s. Today, the city is home to about 100,000 people and is the largest city on North Carolina's coast.

The byway begins at the intersection of U.S. 74/N.C. 133 (Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway) and North Third Street, adjacent to the Isabel Holmes Bridge over the Cape

Fear River. Driving south on North Third Street, the byway first passes the site of the planned 1898 Memorial Park, which will bear witness to racial violence that occurred near this location on Nov. 10, 1898, an important event in Wilmington's history. **The byway will turn right on**

North Front Street, where motorists are greeted with a sweeping view of the Cape Fear River.

Turn right onto Red Cross Street, which becomes North Water Street, which then changes to South Water Street after passing Market Street.

The waterfront area features the federal courthouse; Wilmington's Riverwalk, a well-maintained pedestrian promenade that extends the length of Water Street; and many unique shops and restaurants. *The U.S.S. North Carolina*, which played a major role in a number of Pacific Ocean battles during World War II, rests just across the river. The ship, now a state historic site, offers tours for a fee.

At the entrance to Chandler's Wharf, a colonial seaport-turned-shopping area featuring oyster shell streets, **turn left onto Ann Street and**



Tourists enjoy downtown Wilmington